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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 EB-08 COME-00
AGRE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 L-03 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-10
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----------088175 130634Z /16
R 121150Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5992

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 4994

FROM AMBASSADOR FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EAID, DR
SUBJECT: ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR GUZMAN GOVERNMENT

REF: (A) STATE 215587, (B) STATE 227738

1. WE HAVE NOW HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS OFFICIALS OF GUZMAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE ECONOMIC SUPPORT PER REFTEL (A). TECHNICAL SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF HEALTH WERE INFORMED THAT HEALTH LOAN HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED FOR SIGNATURE, BUT THAT GODR ARREARAGES AND FACT THAT USG FUNDS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL NEXT FISCAL YEAR WILL DELAY FURTHER ACTION. BOTH OFFICIALS, WHILE DISAPPOINTED AT THIS DELAY, ACCEPTED THE NEWS GRACEFULLY, EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN CONTINUED US CONCERN AND SUPPORT FOR THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS THEY FACE. SECRETARY OF HEALTH INITIALLY INDICATED HE PREFERRED WITHHOLD PUBLICITY ON LOAN UNTIL ACTUAL SIGNING, BUT LAST WEEK GAVE BRIEF PRESS INTERVIEW ON LOAN IN CONNECTION WITH HIS OVERALL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND PLANS.

2. BROAD OUTLINE OF EDUCATION LOAN HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH NEW SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, WHO ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO EARLY AUTHORIZATION AND SIGNING.
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3. IN OTHER CONTACTS AT CABINET LEVEL AND IN ANSWER TO FREQUENT PRESS INQUIRIES ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, I HAVE CONTINUED TO REPEAT HIGH-LEVEL US INTEREST WITHOUT GETTING INTO ANY DETAILS OF PROGRAMS OR AMOUNTS. AT SAME TIME, WE CONTINUE TO STRESS TO GODR OFFICIALS THAT A QUICK SOLUTION TO THE ARREARAGES PROBLEM

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IS AN INDISPENSABLE FIRST MOVE BY GODR. IN THIS CONNECTION, GODR PAYMENT OF AID LOAN ARREARAGES TMROUGH END OF JULY ($999,434) AND PL-480 JUNE AND JULY PAYMENTS ($2.7 MILLION) ARE HOPEFUL SIGNS THAT GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE GUZMAN ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THIS PROBLEM ARE BEING FOLLOWED UP WITH POSITIVE ACTIONS.

4. PRESIDENT GUZMAN'S LETTER OF AUGUST 16 (SANTO DOMINGO 4508) TO PRESIDENT CARTER REFERRED TO USG CONSIDERATION OF AN $11 MILLION PL-480 PROGRAM FOR THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. WHERE THIS FIGURE COMES FROM REMAINS SOMETHING OF A MYSTERY, BUT WHATEVER WE DO NOW WILL INEVITABLY BE MEASURED AGAINST IT. KNOWING THE MANY PROBLEMS ON PL-480, I WILL APPRECIATE WORD AS SOON AS DECISION REACHED ON HOW FAR WE CAN GO TOWARD MEETING GUZMAN'S REQUEST FOR AN INCREASE TO $21. MILLION. INTEREST REMAINS HIGH AND I EXPECT TO BE DELIVERING PRESIDENT CARTER'S REPLY (REF B) TO GUZMAN AS SOON AS RECEIVED IN NEXT FEW DAYS.
YOST

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